

REPORT OF A COUNSELLING INTERNSHIP AT
EUGENE VATERS ACADEMY AND JUNIOR HIGH,
ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND, INCLUDING A
RESEARCH PROJECT: IMPLEMENTATION AND
EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A PEER
HELPING TRAINING PROGRAM AT THE JUNIOR HIGH

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

**TOTAL OF 10 PAGES ONLY
MAY BE XEROXED**

(Without Author's Permission)

KELLY LYNN BRENTON

Faculty of Education
Memorial University of Newfoundland

**Report of a counselling internship at Eugene Vaters Academy and
Junior High, St. John's, Newfoundland, including a research project:
Implementation and evaluation of the effectiveness of a peer helping
training program at the Junior High.**

by

Kelly Lynn Brenton, *B.Sc., B.Ed.*

An internship report submitted to the school of Graduate Studies in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

August 1999

St. John's

Newfoundland

ABSTRACT

This report describes an 11-week internship at Eugene Vaters Academy and Junior High located in St. John's. During the internship, I engaged in many professional activities which enabled me to enhance and build on my skills as a counsellor. These activities included: individual counselling, group counselling, participating in case conferences, completing a variety of comprehensive assessments, participating in two inservices, administering developmental classroom guidance programs in personal safety and conflict resolution, and participating in school transition team meetings.

I also had an opportunity to implement and deliver a Peer Helping Training Program at Eugene Vaters Junior High and to conduct research on the effectiveness of this training. In particular, the research was conducted to determine whether the training was effective in increasing the basic counselling skills of the participants.

The results of this research study show that all participants demonstrated post-training gains in listening ability, empathic responding, empathic listening, and paraphrasing.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It is with sincere appreciation that I acknowledge those who have helped me during my internship and in the completion of this report.

I am grateful to have had Dr. William Kennedy as my internship faculty supervisor. I thank him for his time, support, direction, and encouragement.

I wish to thank Mrs. Paula George, my internship field supervisor, for her guidance, encouragement, patience, and friendship. She is an exemplary counsellor, who has taught me much about hard work and dedication to the profession.

I wish to thank the staff at Eugene Vaters Academy and Junior High for acting as my placement sites. I especially wish to thank Eugene Vaters Junior High for granting me permission to conduct my research at the school.

In addition, I would like to express sincere gratitude to my parents for all their love and support throughout my professional and personal development.

Finally, I would like to thank my husband, Dean, and my daughters, Jennifer and Bethany, for their ongoing support, patience, understanding, and love.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	i
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	ii
CHAPTER 1	
INTRODUCTION	1
Rationale for the Internship	1
The Internship Setting	2
Supervision	3
Internship Goals and Objectives	5
CHAPTER 2	
THE INTERNSHIP: A DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES	12
Psychoeducational Assessment	12
Individual Counselling	13
Group Counselling	15
Case Conferencing	16
Inservice	17
Developmental Counselling	17
Transition Team Meetings	18

Readings	19
Other Activities	19
Conclusion	20
 CHAPTER 3	
THE RESEARCH	21
Purpose of the Study	21
Rationale	21
Literature Review	22
 CHAPTER 4	
METHODOLOGY	28
Research Question	28
Data Collection	28
Selection of Peer Helpers	29
Limitation	30
Program and Delivery	31
Instrument	32
 CHAPTER 5	
RESULTS	33

Listening Ability	33
Empathic Responding	34
Empathic Listening	36
Paraphrasing	37
Discussion of Findings	38
 CHAPTER 6	
SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS	40
Summary	40
Recommendations	41
 REFERENCES	42
 APPENDIX A - READINGS	44
 APPENDIX B - PRETEST AND POST-TEST	47
 APPENDIX C - CONSENT FORMS	58
 APPENDIX D - NOMINATION FORM	62
 APPENDIX E - APPLICATION FORM	64
 APPENDIX F - CONFIDENTIALITY CONTRACT	67
 APPENDIX G - PEER HELPING TRAINING MODULES	69

LIST OF TABLES

		Page
Table 1	Type and duration of activities used to develop proficiency in group counselling skills	6
Table 2	Type and duration of activities used to develop and improve individual counselling skills	7
Table 3	Type and duration of activities used to conduct a developmental classroom counselling program	9
Table 4	Type and duration of activities participated in to develop competency in consultation	10
Table 5	Type and frequency of tests administered during the internship	13
Table 6	Comparison of pretest and post-test responses, listening ability	34
Table 7	Comparison of pretest and post-test responses, empathic responding	35
Table 8	Comparison of pretest and post-test responses, empathic listening	36
Table 9	Comparison of pretest and post-test responses, paraphrasing skills	38

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Rationale

Students in the Educational Psychology program must choose to complete a thesis, internship, project, or folio paper as partial requirement for their graduate program. The internship option consists of a placement following the successful completion of all course work. The internship provides an opportunity to gain practical experience and to exercise professional responsibilities in the area of guidance and counselling. School counselling is a profession where everyday experience and practice allow for the refining of acquired skills, as well as the development of new skills and knowledge. The internship also provides the opportunity to experience how theory is connected to practice. It helps to bridge the gap between academic course work and the knowledge and skills needed to be a counsellor.

The following guidelines were developed by the Faculty of Education to ensure the appropriateness of the internship program:

- It is normally undertaken after or near completion of course work, and where applicable, completion of an appropriate practicum;
- It consists of supervised activities in which the intern has the opportunity to exercise professional responsibilities which are associated with the profession for which he/she is preparing;

- The activities should be such that the intern receives a breadth and depth of experience;
- The research should be integrated with the overall objectives of the internship and is conducted at the work site; and
- Interested students must submit and have approved by the Faculty of Education, a formal internship proposal.

My internship, conducted at Eugene Vaters Academy and Junior High, St. John's, Newfoundland, was selected because it provided the opportunity for the enhancement and development of the professional skills and knowledge needed in the field of school counselling. It allowed me the opportunity to gain practical experience in the area of individual and group counselling and to apply theoretical concepts learned during the formal part of my program. The internship also provided the opportunity to work with students from Kindergarten to Grade 9. The exposure to primary/elementary school counselling was extremely valuable because of my lack of experience in this area. Lastly, the internship provided the opportunity to develop competencies in the area of psychoeducational assessment and report writing.

The Internship Setting

Eugene Vaters Academy and Junior High

Eugene Vaters Academy and Junior High served as the setting for my internship. Eugene Vaters Academy is a Kindergarten to Grade 6 school, with an enrollment of

approximately 250 students. The Junior High has approximately 200 students from Grades 7 through 9. Previous to the 1998-1999 school year, it housed students from Grade 7 through 12. This is the school's first year exclusively as a Junior High School. . The guidance counsellor is shared between the two schools, with mornings and afternoons spent at separate schools.

Eugene Vaters Academy and Junior High were chosen as the internship setting for the following reasons:

- It offered a quality of learning opportunities and experiences;
- It offered relevant practical experiences in the actual setting in which I ultimately expect to work;
- It provided me experience at both the elementary and junior high levels;
- It had a quality field supervisor at the setting;
- It offered quality professional supervision;
- It offered ready access to the university supervisor; and
- It provided the time for full-time involvement required to complete the internship.

Supervision

The responsibility for my supervision was shared by the Faculty of Education, Memorial University and Eugene Vaters Academy and Junior High.

My university supervisor was Dr. William Kennedy. Dr. Kennedy holds a doctoral degree in the area of counselling and is currently the Coordinator of the Graduate Counselling Program at Memorial University of Newfoundland. He had the following responsibilities:

- assisting in the preparation of the internship proposal;
- being available throughout the internship for consultation with the intern and the field supervisor, as the need arose;
- consulting with the intern and the field supervisor midway through the internship to assess the intern's progress; and
- participating in a final session with the intern and field supervisor, to conclude evaluation and closure of the internship.

At the school, the field supervisor was Mrs. Paula George, the school counsellor. She had the following responsibilities:

- to consult with the intern and the faculty supervisor during the development of the internship proposal;
- to have primary responsibility for the ongoing supervision of the intern's counselling activities;
- to facilitate the intern's access to appropriate professional opportunities to ensure a full and successful internship experience;
- to meet with the intern once a week, to assess the intern's progress and determine any changes in the internship, as needed;

- to meet with the intern and the faculty supervisor midway through the internship period to assess the progress and determine further direction; and
- to meet with the faculty supervisor at the conclusion of the internship to conclude a summative evaluation of the intern and the internship.

Internship Goals and Objectives

The overall goal of the internship is to afford the intern the opportunity to gain further experience and professional competence in the field of school counselling. The following is an outline of the specific goals of the internship, along with a description of the activities undertaken to achieve these goals.

Goal 1: To further develop skills and competency in the area of comprehensive psychoeducational assessment.

This goal was accomplished through the following activities:

- reviewing reports that were written by other school counsellors and educational psychologists;
- administering and scoring eight intelligence tests using the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC-III), one achievement test using the Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT), one Test of Visual Motor Skills (TVMS), nine Test of Auditory Perceptual Skills (TAPS),

and ten Test of Visual Perceptual Skills (TVPS);

- completing eight comprehensive assessments, which included interpreting the data and report writing;
- explaining the results and recommendations to the parents and teachers involved at four case conferences; and
- reading several books in the area of assessment.

Goal 2: To become more proficient in group counselling skills.

This goal was accomplished through the activities outlined in Table 1.

Table 1

Type and Duration of Activities Used to Develop Proficiency in Group Counselling Skills

Activity	Hours
Study skills group with elementary students	3 hours
Study skills group with junior high students	3 hours
Peer Helping training with Grades 7 and 8 students	12 hours

Goal 3: To continue to develop my individual counselling skills.

This goal was accomplished through the activities as presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Type and Duration of Activities Used to Develop and Improve Individual Counselling Skills

Activity	Frequency
Individual counselling with four clients	10 hours
Reviewing individual counselling sessions, both individually as well as with field supervisor and completing session summaries for the confidential files.	20 hours
Observation of field supervisor in individual counselling sessions	10 hours
Reading on counselling theories, techniques, and new approaches	20 hours

Goal 4: To become more knowledgeable on the Pathways to Programming and Graduation document and the role of the guidance counsellor in this process.

This goal was accomplished through (a) attending two inservices on the new Pathways to Programming and Graduation document; (b) completing Pathway summaries sheets on all students at the Junior High who are presently on any pathway

besides Pathway One; (c) completing Pathway summary sheets on students that will be attending the Junior High School in 1999-2000; (d) attending five Program Planning Team meetings; and (e) obtaining and reading my own copy of the Pathways document.

Pathways to Programming and Graduation was written to support teachers in decision making and organizational planning for students. The following are the five Pathways the document is comprised of:

1. Provincially Prescribed Programs/Courses,
2. Provincially Prescribed Programs/Courses with Supports,
3. Modified Programs/Courses,
4. Alternate Programs/Courses, and
5. Alternate Curriculum.

Goal 5: To conduct a developmental counselling program within the classroom.

This goal was accomplished through the following activities outlined in Table 3.

Table 3**Type and Duration of Activities Used to Conduct a Developmental Classroom****Counselling Program**

Activity	Frequency
Personal safety course in Grade 3	10 hours
Career Education in Grade 9	3 hours
Conflict resolution program in Grade 6	5 hours

Goal 6: To acquire a better understanding of the counsellor's role within the elementary and the junior high school setting.

This goal was accomplished through (a) observations of students during structured and unstructured times; (b) individual and group counselling at both the elementary and junior high schools; and (c) readings related to counselling at both settings.

Goal 7: To develop competency in consultation.

This was accomplished through a variety of activities as presented in Table 4.

Table 4**Type and Duration of Activities Participated in to Develop Competency in Consultation**

Activity	Frequency
Participating in case conferences	5 hours
Meetings with school administration	
regarding individual students, orientation	
planning, and goal-setting for upcoming	8 hours
school year	
Participating in program planning team	
meetings	6 hours
Meeting with school board official to	
discuss Criteria C and G documentation.	4 hours
Involvement in school transition	
meetings	11 hours
Attending a school counsellors' cluster	
meeting	2 hours
Consultation daily with field supervisor	36 hours

Goal 8: To participate in professional development through attending available inservices offered at the schools.

This was accomplished through attending a two-day inservice on Crisis

Prevention Intervention training which was presented by the Avalon East School Board, as well as, attending two inservices on the Pathways to Programming and Graduation document.

Goal 9: To conduct a research study involving the implementation and delivery of a Peer Helping Training Program at Eugene Vaters Junior High and an evaluation of the effectiveness of this training to increase the level of counselling skills in the participants.

This goal was achieved through the implementation and delivery of a Peer Helping Training Program at Eugene Vaters Junior High School. It also involved the evaluation of the effectiveness of this training. Specifically, the evaluation focused on whether the peer helpers increased their level of basic helping skills after they participated in the Peer Helping training. Data was collected through pre- and post-testing the participants' listening ability, empathic responding, empathic listening, and paraphrasing. The training sessions were taken from Carr & Saunders (1980), Tindall (1985), and O'Reilly & Hynes (1992), Wittmer & Thompson (1995). See Appendix G for a description of the modules used during the training.

CHAPTER 2

THE INTERNSHIP: DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

This chapter will serve to highlight the various activities that were undertaken during my internship at Eugene Vaters Academy and Junior High from April 12-June 25, 1999. During the internship, I participated in a variety of activities which served to enhance my counselling skills and provide a learning environment to continue my professional development as a school counsellor. In each of the following areas I was given the opportunity to learn more about the responsibilities of a counsellor and the skills needed to carry out these responsibilities effectively.

Psychoeducational Assessment

A major part of my internship involved the administration, interpretation of data, and report writing involved with comprehensive assessments. The Department of Education informed school districts that all students receiving special services must have an updated comprehensive assessment. At both Vaters Academy and Junior High, previous to this year, psychoeducational assessments were completed by the educational psychologist. This is no longer the case. All comprehensive assessments are now completed by the school counsellor. The type and frequency of tests administered during the internship are listed in Table 5.

Table 5**Type and Frequency of Tests Administered During the Internship**

Type of Test	Frequency
Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children- Third Edition	6 (12 hours)
Wechsler Individual Achievement Test	1 (2 hours)
Test of Auditory Perceptual Skills	7 (1.5 hours)
Test of Visual Perceptual Skills	7 (1.5 hours)
Test of Visual Motor Skills	1 (0.5 hours)
Informal Assessments:	
Classroom Observations	2 (1 hour)

Upon completion of the administrations and the report writing, I met with all individuals involved to discuss the student's strengths and needs and review the recommendations.

Individual Counselling

At the onset of my internship, I was assigned counselling responsibilities for four students. Each was at a different grade level and experiencing unique difficulties. One student, who was in the Primary level, exhibited autistic tendencies and had been informally diagnosed with Pervasive Developmental Disorder. She was experiencing great emotional and social stress as the developmental gap widened between her and

her classmates. In working with this student, I used Social Stories, social skills training, and art/play therapy.

The next student was in the Elementary level. He was referred by his classroom teacher because of behavioral difficulties within the classroom. There were concerns about defiance, strange ideation, and immature social skills. As well, there seemed to be no remorse for his inappropriate actions. The principal, school counsellor, his homeroom teacher, and I met to determine what course of action we would take. It was decided to start him on a behavioral modification plan to help eliminate some of the undesirable behaviors within the classroom. This plan only worked for about two weeks, because positive and negative consequences were not consistently given at home. I also used social skills training, self-esteem building, and art/play therapy.

At the Junior High, I met regularly with two students. One of the students was receiving special services because she has a developmental/social disorder called SOTOS disease. This student had difficulty with peer interactions, which often resulted in problems she did not know how to solve. Together we worked on improving her social skills, building her self-esteem, and problem-solving.

The final student I met with was diagnosed with ADHD about four years ago and has been on Ritalin since that time. He was being seen because of ongoing problems maintaining attention in the classroom and subsequent academic concerns. As well, he experienced a breakup with his girlfriend which added to his inattentiveness and lack of motivation in the classroom. The counselling methods used were

predominantly a problem-solving approach and self-esteem building. I also provided him with tutoring services in preparation for his final examinations.

Group Counselling

During the internship, I had the opportunity to organize and lead three groups: two study skills groups and a peer helping group. The first study skills group was implemented at the elementary level. Teachers recommended one student from each homeroom class to participate in the group. There were four students from Grades 4 through 6 who returned signed parental consent forms to participate. The study skills group ran for six weeks during the second half of lunch on Thursdays. During this time, students were taught organizational skills, how to implement study schedules, and tips for test taking and report writing. This group ended with the students creating posters on **Effective Study Skills**, followed a closing pizza party.

The other study skills group was implemented at the Junior High. Once again the homeroom teachers provided names of students whom they felt would benefit from this type of experience. Five of these students returned signed parental consent forms. This group ran for six weeks during the second half of lunch on Wednesdays. They were taught the same type of skills as the elementary group, using age appropriate material.

Finally, I implemented a Peer Helping Training Program at Eugene Vaters

Junior High school. This involved six students from Grades 7 and 8 who were selected based on teacher recommendation and personal application forms. I delivered the Peer Helping training two hours a week during a six-week period. The Peer Helping training was evaluated to determine whether it was effective in increasing the basic counselling skills of the participants. This program and the evaluation study will be further discussed in the **Methodology** and **Results** sections of this report.

Case Conferences

During the course of the internship, I had the opportunity to attend and participate in a number of case conferences. Four of the case conferences attended involved a number of professionals from outside agencies, such as psychologists, medical doctors, speech-language pathologist, social worker, behavior management specialist, and occupational therapist. This experience made me more cognizant of the multi-disciplinary approach that is needed to adequately and optimally meet the needs of students.

I participated in three other case conferences with school personnel and parent(s). The purpose of these meetings was to explain assessment results and recommendations for future educational programming. These meetings also provided the forum for discussing concerns with present programming and to receive permission for the provision of any special services needed.

Inservice

I participated in three inservices during my internship. The first was a two day workshop on Crisis Prevention Intervention, which dealt with how to prevent crisis situations from occurring and how to properly intervene in order to reduce potential harm.

The other two inservices were facilitated by my field supervisor and the special needs teacher in each school. They were one-day workshops that were held on separate occasions at both Eugene Vaters Academy and Junior High. The focus of the workshops was to familiarize teachers with the Pathways to Programming and Graduation document and the procedure to follow when referring a student for special services. The teachers also went through the process of completing Pathway summary sheets for all students who were presently on a Pathway besides Pathway One.

Developmental Counselling

During the internship, I conducted a personal safety program with both classes of Grade 3 students at Eugene Vaters Academy. The program consisted of 10 sessions, dealing with such topics as *My Feelings, My Body, Appropriate/Inappropriate Touching, Secrets, Saying No, and People Who Can Help*.

I also conducted a Conflict Resolution program for both classes of Grade 6 students. The material used included video segments, role-playing, discussion, and

worksheets. The program involved five sessions on topics which included *Active Listening, I-Messages, Problem-solving, and Brainstorming*. This was completed during the last two weeks of school, as a preparation for junior high school.

Both of these classroom programs gave me the opportunity to interact with students on a preventive level. While the work of a school counsellor is often focused on crisis counselling, it is essential that developmental counselling programs are implemented at all levels to prevent crisis from occurring in the first place.

Transition Team Meetings

With the implementation of neighborhood schools for the 1999-2000 school year, I was involved in transition team meetings for both Eugene Vaters Academy and Junior High. My field supervisor, special needs teacher, and principal from the Junior High school made trips to both St. Teresa's Elementary and Roncalli Elementary. These trips were arranged to meet with Grade 6 students who were assigned to Eugene Vaters Junior High for the upcoming school year. After this meeting, we met with the special services team and the Grade 6 teachers to discuss students with special needs and to identify which Pathway each student was on.

We also met with St. Teresa's teachers on another occasion to discuss students that were assigned to Vaters Academy for the upcoming school year. Once again we considered students with special needs and identified the Pathways for each of the

students.

Readings

I read as widely as possible during the internship experience. This was an ongoing activity which included topics of interest and areas of need. I am aware that by continuing to read in various areas of counselling, I will continue to grow as a counsellor. For a complete list of books and articles read, refer to Appendix A.

Other Activities

I was also involved in many other activities during the internship besides those activities described above. Some of these activities are outlined below:

- participated in orientation days at the Junior High school for next year's Grade 7 students;
- attended orientation exercises at Prince of Wales Collegiate with some of the Grade 9 students from the Junior High school;
- attended the **Heroes** production, presented by the Red Cross at the Reid Community Center in Mount Pearl;
- participated in the Grade 9 Career Education class;
- attended a school counsellors' cluster meeting;
- attended a meeting with the educational psychologist at the Avalon East School

Board to discuss Criteria C and G documentation; and

- provided oral testing for selected students during final examinations.

Conclusion

This chapter has served to outline the various activities in which I was engaged during my 11-week internship at Eugene Vaters Academy and Junior High. As a result of the diverse experiences described above, I feel my internship proved extremely worthwhile, allowing me the opportunity to successfully achieve the overall goal of enhancing my professional growth and development as a counsellor. This placement has given me the opportunity to build on my counselling skills, learn from experienced and dedicated professionals, and increase my confidence as a competent counsellor.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH: PEER HELPING TRAINING PROGRAM

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of my internship research project was to implement and deliver a Peer Helping Training Program to a selected group of Grade 7 and 8 students at Eugene Vaters Junior High School. The effectiveness of this training was evaluated using a pre- and post-test to determine whether the participants of the program evidenced a positive change in their level of basic counselling skills. The areas tested were listening ability, empathic responding, empathic listening, and paraphrasing.

Rationale

Friends are often the number one helping resource in the school setting. A friend is often in a position to recognize when another friend is experiencing a problem and to offer immediate advice and feedback, long before it comes to the attention of the school counsellor (Carr, 1987). In light of this, it is important to provide the opportunity for youth to be a support for each other. The Peer Helping Program in this study was implemented to offer this opportunity and capitalize upon the natural helping system of friends. This program was seen as a means of training students to more effectively use the influence they already possess with their peers. Also, in the upcoming school year Eugene Vaters Junior High will experience a substantial increase in its student

population. The Peer Helping Program was implemented with the vision that it would expand the counselling network at the school during this critical time.

Literature Review

Research has shown that friends are often the first source of guidance for teens with personal problems. The Survey of American Teens, undertaken by the American Home Economics Association, reported that 55% of teens turned to friends for advice and help in overcoming problems. The study also showed that 1 in 6 felt they had no one to turn to for advice in important decisions (Herr and Cramer, 1992). Many students feel that they cannot turn to a professional for help because of feelings of indebtedness and loss of self-esteem. A study of school counselling in British Columbia reflects this finding. The study indicated that 60-70% of students polled would not consult a school counsellor about problems related to sex, drugs, or drinking, and only 14.5% of the senior students polled would see a counsellor about loneliness. Instead, adolescents are more likely to turn to their peers when they experience worries, frustrations, or dilemmas (Edge, 1985).

Within the school setting, it is important to train a core group of students drawn from different ages and intellectual and social backgrounds to work as peer helpers. These students can then be trained to do the more rudimentary tasks attendant to counselling (Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL), 1990). The

prevalence of this natural helping system should lead to the adoption of a peer resource model of education.

There are several ways in which peer relationships contribute to a student's social and cognitive development and socialization. Through peer interactions, children learn directly attitudes, values, and skills. They learn to share, help, comfort, and to empathize with others. Such interactions are critical in moral development, learning of social skills, and the development of identity and autonomy. Peer acceptance has also been related to academic achievement (NWREL, 1990). By giving students control and freedom through peer interactions within the classroom, positive academic and social gains are produced in the young people. Johnson and Johnson (1983) found that this cooperative peer interaction in learning and peer programs also produces substantial non-academic benefits, such as positive student attitude toward school, classmates, and themselves.

Adolescents respond best when there is support from their peers. Consequently, the likelihood of a program's success increases when the program comprises a peer approach (Belkin, 1988). According to Glasser (1986), these programs work because they satisfy the four basic human psychological needs to belong and love, to gain power, to be free, and to have fun. Despite all the benefits of such programs, they are still underused in schools, with peer interactions constituting only 7-20% of classroom time (NWREL, 1990).

Although large scale evaluation has not occurred, there is evidence that

peer helping is beneficial for the helper as well. Helpers describe unexpected rewards in personal growth because of the skills developed in peer helper training programs. The peer helper who is learning to help others receives unexpected dividends from the training experience (Carroll and King, 1985). Through these programs, helpers acquire many valuable qualities, such as increased self-esteem in work settings, confidence in dealing with job interviews, enhanced professional and personal relationships, and the ability to work cooperatively and efficiently in organizing tasks (Carr & Owl, 1996). Involvement in helping opportunities also increases overall self-esteem, enhances moral development, and increases the ability to create and maintain social relationships (NWREL, 1990). According to Riessman, as cited in NWREL, a major proponent of the *Helper Therapy Principle*, helping is also beneficial for the following reasons: the helper feels good because he has something to contribute, it is an active role in which the helper feels less dependant, the helper feels he is socially useful, the helper experiences a feeling of being capable of doing something, and it encourages the helper to be open to learning in order to help effectively. Many of the peer helpers even report gaining more from their support opportunities than the peers they help. This growth and change reported by helpers is partially due to the acquisition of empathy (Carroll and King, 1985).

Peer helping programs are beneficial to the school in which they are used. They provide needed leadership training to young people, improve the academic achievement of students, provide a valuable resource for working with slow learners, improve

decision-making skills of students, provide career development for students, enhance interpersonal relations, provide friendship, and improve overall class and school climate (Belkin, 1988; Carr, 1987; Carr, 1991). As well, the effective use of peers has been advocated to supplement understaffed programs. At a time when funding is cut and counsellors are overloaded, peer helping is an effective and efficient way to extend the counsellor's services (Herr and Cramer, 1992).

According to the Profile '96 - Educational Indicators (1996), graduation rates in Newfoundland rose steadily from 63.5% in 1988/89 to 76.7% in 1994/95. Over the six year period, the graduation rates had increased 13 percentage points. With a steady increase in graduation rates, dropout rates have shown a decline. Despite this decline, the dropout rate in Newfoundland was 11% during the 1993/94 school year, with the male dropout rate remaining significantly higher than the female rate (Profile '96, 1996). Many of these students have experienced the frustration of academic failure. To succeed in learning, many students require individual academic assistance, something the classroom teacher cannot always provide on a regular basis. A study by Carr (1991) found that when high school peer helpers were matched with students who had failed two or more courses, the failing students' grades improved and they were less likely to drop out of school. Schools that find ways to build on the natural resources of students by providing opportunities for positive, helpful interactions increase the likelihood of the success of dropout prevention.

Peer helpers can also be of assistance to the career development of students.

With ever-increasing cutbacks and high unemployment, there has been generated a new interest in how counselling can contribute to the world of work. Studies of students, teachers, and counsellors have revealed a strong demand and need for school counsellors to provide leadership and service in the area of career counselling (Carr, 1987). Students are concerned about their career development, their futures, and getting a job, but they are discussing these concerns with friends more often than with counsellors (Carr, 1987). Once again, this points to the rationale of using peers within the school counselling program. Within the school context, peer helpers can be trained to use career development practices with their peers. Student willingness to be peer career helpers will probably be extensive because it focuses on an area which students give high priority. Peer helpers can assist, encourage, and motivate students in preparing for a future occupation. They can provide the additional information that students need to make wise decisions about their career development and aid in specific areas throughout the exploratory period. They can also be a support service to the educational program of students who need the extra help. Academic success is a major component of an individual's career development. Therefore, many peer programs utilize helpers as tutors for those who need assistance in overcoming learning difficulties and frustrations.

Today, schools face educational cutbacks which hinder the process of providing the best educational opportunities for students. To meet the continuing demands on our education system, there is a need to empower existing resources. Students are a natural

resource in the school and, therefore, should be used to meet the need of the school. By plugging into this resource, students can be trained to help their peers in a variety of ways and thus capitalize on what the research is saying, that students turn to each other in times of need (Ives and Malone, 1991).

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

Research Question

The Peer Helping Training Program at Eugene Vaters Junior High was implemented to provide an extension of the helping network in the school. Before students could become involved in helping others, it was necessary that they participate in a training program focussed on basic counselling skills. It was decided that there was a need to determine whether the training had been effective in increasing the level of counselling skills in the participants. In evaluating whether the peer helpers had attained this level of skill, an attempt was made to answer the following research question:

- Will the participants of the Peer Helping Training Program show an increase in their level of basic counselling skills as determined by a pretest and a post-test of listening ability, empathic responding, empathic listening, and paraphrasing?

Data Collection

Data was collected from the participants in the Peer Helping Training Program at Eugene Vaters Junior High School. A test containing ten items was given to these students prior to the training and again after the training had been completed. This test focussed on four basic counselling skills: **Listening ability**- the ability to listen

carefully to the client and to accurately identify the client's key experiences, behaviors, and feelings associated with these experiences and behaviors, **Empathic listening**-the ability to understand the other person's feelings and thoughts, **Empathic responding**-the ability to communicate understanding of a person's feelings and thoughts in an accurate and effective manner, and **Paraphrasing**-the ability to put together the important details of a discussion for clarification and understanding. The test included situational questioning which required the students to give written responses, except for three questions where students chose the best response from three choices. See Appendix B for the pretest and the post-test.

Selection of Peer Helpers

The selection process began with teachers nominating students from Grades 7 and 8. Prior to nominations, a meeting was held with these teachers to explain the program and to present the criteria for nomination. The teachers were asked to nominate students, either male or female, who met the following criteria:

- display a genuine interest in helping others;
- show a tolerance for differences in people;
- show characteristics of warmth, caring, and acceptance of others; and
- show leadership qualities in various social groups.

A handout was distributed, which outlined these desirable characteristics, so that each

teacher was aware of the criteria, and to facilitate their choices (see Appendix D). These lists were collected when teachers had made their selections.

The twelve students nominated were invited to a meeting where the program was explained. Those who were interested in participating in the program were invited to complete an application form (see Appendix E). Of the twelve nominated, only six, five female and one male, completed the application form needed to participate in the program.

As an adjunct to the selection process, parents of the participants were sent a letter describing the program's objectives and the commitment required of the students (see Appendix C). The parents were also sent a pamphlet from **Peer Resources** entitled Peer Helping: Youth Working Together, Information for Children, Adolescents, and Parents. This pamphlet addressed the benefits of peer helping, effective peer programs, what peer helping is, and how peer helpers help. Parental consent was sought and received for their child's involvement in the research program (see Appendix C).

Limitation

Due to the small sample size and the research being limited to one population of students, the results of the study may not necessarily be generalized to other populations.

Program and Delivery

Prior to the commencement of training, students were given the opportunity to complete the pretest on counselling skills. The skills tested were listening ability, empathic responding, empathic listening, and paraphrasing.

Training occurred during regular class time, two one-hour sessions per week for six weeks. The training program used in implementing the peer helping program was adapted from predominantly three sources: Carr & Saunders (1980), Tindall (1985), and O'Reilly & Hynes (1992). Supplementary group activities were taken from Wittmer & Thompson (1995).

There were nine modules used during the training program (see Appendix G). These modules focussed on the following topics:

- Orientation,
- Attending,
- Roadblocks to Communication,
- Listening Skills,
- Empathic Listening,
- Empathic Responding,
- Questioning,
- Paraphrasing, and
- Values Clarification.

These modules were taught through lecture, activities, role-playing, modelling, and worksheets. During the orientation module, the importance and necessity of confidentiality was explained to the participants. Each student then completed a confidentiality contract (see Appendix F).

Attendance during all training sessions was high. In fact, 100% attendance was obtained at all training sessions except one, where one student was absent due to sickness.

The training program ended with a four-hour session where the post-test was administered. There was also a closing pizza party for the peer helpers during this time and they each received certificates indicating that they had successfully completed the Peer Helping training.

Instrument

Pretraining and post-training assessment of counselling skills was achieved through the use of a test compiled from three sources. The listening ability section was taken from Egan (1994) and all other sections were taken from O'Reilly & Hynes (1992). The rating scale for empathic responding and paraphrasing was taken from Tindall (1985).

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS

Listening Ability

The number of correct responses was determined from a total of six responses in this section. Responses were noted as correct if the student accurately described the experience, behavior, and feelings related to the presented situation.

A comparison of pretest and post-test findings is presented in Table 6. These findings show that four participants had a positive change in the number correct from pre- to post-test. One participant experienced no difference between the number of correct responses before and after training. Peer Helper #3 had all responses correct on both the pre- and post-test. Table 6 also shows that the change in the number correct from pretest to post-test is significant at the $p = < .05$ level.

Table 6Comparison of Pretest and Post-test Responses, Listening Ability

Peer Helper	Number Correct	
	Pretest	Post-test
# 1	1	3
# 2	3	6
# 3	6	6
# 4	5	5
# 5	3	6
# 6	3	6
Mean	3.50	5.33
t-value	-2.10144	
P (T<=t)	0.030963	

Empathic Responding

The terms *High*, *Medium*, and *Low* were used to identify the level of responding in each of the presented situations. The following are definitions of *High*, *Medium*, and *Low* empathic responding:

High (H) Response: The helper accurately hears the words expressed by the helpee. The helper accurately responds to both feelings and content.

Medium (M) Response: The helper responds to the feelings but not accurately.

The helper only responds partially to the content. The helper encourages and shows willingness to listen to the helpee.

Low (L) Response: The helper does not respond to the feelings. The helper does not respond accurately to the content. The helper uses communication stoppers.

Table 7 presents the level of response from pretesting to post-testing. Upon comparison, it is seen that all participants improved their level of empathic responding.

Table 7

Comparison of Pretest and Post-test Responses, Empathic Responding

Peer Helper	Pretest			Post-test		
	Situation	Situation	Situation	Situation	Situation	Situation
	1	2	3	1	2	3
# 1	L	L	L	H	M	H
# 2	L	L	L	H	H	H
# 3	L	L	L	H	M	M
# 4	L	L	L	H	H	M
# 5	L	L	M	H	H	H
# 6	L	L	M	M	M	H

Empathic Listening

In this section, the number of correct choices from three questions was determined. Students were required to choose, from the responses provided, the response which identified accurately both the feeling and content.

The comparison of the number of correct responses on the pretest and the post-test is shown in Table 8. This comparison shows a significant increase in the number of correct responses for all participants at the $p = < .01$ level.

Table 8

Comparison of Pretest and Post-test Responses, Empathic Listening

Peer Helper	Number Correct	
	Pretest	Post-test
# 1	1	2
# 2	1	3
# 3	0	2
# 4	2	3
# 5	1	3
# 6	0	3
Mean	0.83	2.67
t-value	-4.91935	
P (T<=t)	0.000303	

Paraphrasing

Once again the terms *High*, *Medium*, and *Low* were used to identify the level of the student's paraphrasing of the presented situations. The following are definitions of *High*, *Medium*, and *Low* paraphrasing:

High (H) Response: The helper accurately hears the words expressed by the helpee. The helper accurately paraphrases both feelings and content.

Medium (M) Response: The helper partially hears the content of the statement. The helper paraphrases but without the full meaning coming through. The helper identified feeling but not accurately.

Low (L) Response: The helper does not hear what the helpee has said. The helper does not paraphrase both feelings and content.

Table 9 shows the comparison of pretest and post-test responses for each peer helper. In all instances, except one, this comparison shows that participants improved their level of paraphrasing from the pretesting to the post-testing. The exception to this was Peer Helper 2, who showed no change from pre- to post-test in Situation 2.

Table 9**Comparison of Pretest and Post-test Responses, Paraphrasing Skills**

Peer Helper	Pretest		Post-test	
	Situation 1	Situation 2	Situation 1	Situation 2
# 1	L	L	H	H
# 2	L	L	H	L
# 3	L	L	H	M
# 4	M	M	H	H
# 5	M	M	H	H
# 6	L	M	M	H

Discussion of Findings

The overall conclusion that can be made from the results presented is that the Peer Helping Training Program implemented at Eugene Vaters Junior High was successful in increasing the level of counselling skills of the participants. Analysis of the comparison of the pretest and the post-test responses reveal that the participants demonstrated overall post-training gains in the areas of listening ability, empathic responding, empathic listening, and paraphrasing. On both the listening ability and empathic listening sections, statistical analysis of the responses was completed. These results showed a significant increase in the number of correct responses at both the $p < .05$ and $p < .01$ respectively. On the other two sections, empathic responding and paraphrasing, all participants improved their level of responding, except for one student

who showed no change in the level of response for Situation 2 of the paraphrasing section.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

My internship took place at both Eugene Vaters Academy and Junior High from April 21st to June 25th, 1999, under the direct supervision of Mrs. Paula George, school counsellor, and Dr. William Kennedy, university supervisor. The rationale underlying the internship was to gain as much practical experience as possible in order to enhance my professional growth and development.

The internship afforded me the opportunity to engage in many professional activities which built upon the skills previously learned in the educational psychology program. These activities included: (a) carrying out psychoeducational assessments; (b) individual counselling of students; (c) participating in case conferences and consultation; (d) attending inservices; (e) carrying out a personal safety and a conflict resolution program; (f) participating in transition team meetings; and (g) participating in supervision and evaluation with field supervisor, Mrs. Paula George.

The research component of the internship gave me the opportunity to implement and deliver a Peer Helping Training Program to selected students from Grades 7 and 8 at the Eugene Vaters Junior High. The effectiveness of the training program was then evaluated using a pretest and post-test to determine whether the peer helpers would show a gain in their level of basic counselling skills. The comparison of pretest and post-test responses indicate a gain in the peer helpers' level of responding in the areas

of listening ability, empathic responding, empathic listening, and paraphrasing.

Recommendations

The research aspect of my internship was undertaken with the hope that the results would serve to strengthen the Peer Helping Program at Eugene Vaters Junior High in the future. In light of this, the following recommendations are presented:

- The Peer Helping Program should be implemented early in the school year in order to provide adequate time for the training and planning the delivery of services.
- A suitable place for training needs to be acquired. This place should be quiet, comfortable, and private, with plenty of room for group exercises.
- The program needs to be publicized to the student body. The students need to be aware of who the peer helpers are and their roles within the school. Students should also be made aware of the selection process.
- After the initial nomination process, teachers need to be kept informed of the activities of the peer helpers, as well as their training times.

References

- Belkin, G. S. (1988). Introduction to counseling (3rd ed.). Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Publishers.
- Carr, R. A. (1987). Peer career counsellors: a conceptual and practical guide. Ottawa/Hull: Canadian Employment and Immigration.
- Carr, R. A. (1991). The peer helping strategy for dropout prevention. Unpublished manuscript.
- Carr, R. A. & Saunders, G. (1980). The peer counselling starter kit. Victoria: Peer Counselling Project.
- Carr, R. A., & Owl, G., (Eds.). (1996, Spring). Network news. Peer Counsellor Journal, 12 (1), 14.
- Carroll, M. R., & King, V. G. (1985). The peer helping phenomenon: a quiet revolution. Counseling and Human Development, 17 (9), 1-8.
- Edge, A. K. (1985). Peer counselling programme evaluation: a model for secondary school. Victoria: Peer Systems Consulting Group, Inc.
- Egan, G. (1994). The skilled helper. California: Brooks/Cole Publishing Co.
- Glasser, W. (1986). Control theory in the classroom. New York: Harper and Row.
- Henriksen, E. M. (1991). A peer helping program for the middle school. Canadian Journal of Counselling, 25 (1), 12-18.

Herr, E. L., & Cramer, S. H. (1992). Career guidance and counseling through the lifespan (4th ed.). New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc.

Ives, J., & Malone, R. (1991). Peer counselling training institute. Prince Edward Island: University of Prince Edward Island Department of Education.

Johnson, D., & Johnson, R. (1983). The socialization and achievement crises: are cooperative learning experiences the solution? Applied Social Psychology Annual 4, 119-164.

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. (1990). [<http://www.nwrel.org>].

O'Reilly, J. & Hynes, L. (1992). The peer counselling program. St. John's: Tan Counselling Services.

Profile '96 - Educational Indicators. (1996). Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Department of Education, Division of Evaluation, Research and Planning.

Tindall, J. (1985). Peer power: becoming an effective peer helper-book 1, introductory program. (2nd ed.). Indiana: Accelerated Development Inc.

Wittmer, J. & Thompson, D. (1995). Large group guidance activities. Minneapolis: Educational Media Corporation.

Appendix A

List of Readings

Readings

Baird, B. (1999). The internship, practicum, and field placement handbook. (2nd ed.). New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Brigman, G. & Earley, B. (1990). Peer helping: a training guide. Maine: J. Weston Walch.

Cole, C. J. (1998). Practical guide to the DSM-IV: diagnosis and treatment. (2nd ed.). California: Cole Communications.

Corey, G. (1996). Theory and practice of counseling and psychotherapy. (5th ed.). California: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.

Diagnostic criteria from the DSM-IV. (1994). Washington, D.C.: American Psychiatric Association.

Gibson, R. & Mitchell, M. (1995). Introduction to counseling and guidance. (4th ed.). New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Gladding, S. T. (1999). Group work: a counseling specialty. (3rd ed.). New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Harwell, J. M. (1995). Ready to use information and materials for assessing specific learning disabilities. New York: The Center for Applied Research in Education.

Johnston, S. S. M. (1997). The use of art and play therapy with victims of sexual abuse: a review of the literature. Family Therapy, 24(2), 101-113.

Lerner, J. (1997). Learning disabilities. (7th ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.

McCarney, S., Wunderlich, K. C., & Bauer, A. M. (1993). The prereferral

intervention manual. (2nd ed.). Missouri: Hawthorne Educational Services Inc.

Newcomb, N. (1994). Music: a powerful resource for the elementary school counselor. Elementary School Guidance and Counseling, 29, 150-155.

Newman, F. (1993). Children in crisis. Ontario: Scholastic Canada Ltd.

Sattler, J. (1992). Assessment of children. (3rd ed.). San Diego: Jerome M. Sattler, Publisher, Inc.

Schmidt, J. J. (1991). A survival guide for the elementary/middle school counselor. New York: The Center for Applied Research in Education.

Studer, J. R. & Allton, J. A. (1996). When parents divorce: assisting teens adjust through a group approach. Guidance and Counseling, 11(4), 33-36.

Tindall, J. (1995). Peer programs: planning, implementation, and administration. Pennsylvania: Accelerated Development.

Thomas, A. & Grimes, J. (1988). Best practices in school psychology. Washington, D. C.: The National Association of School Psychologists.

Thompson, C. L. & Rudolph, L. B. (1996). Counseling Children. (4th ed.). California: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.

Tomori, B. (1995). Small group counselling at the elementary level: theory into practice. Guidance and Counseling, 10(3), 24-45.

Woodhouse, P. (Ed.). (1997). Prevention in motion: understanding child/youth maltreatment. Canadian Red Cross.

Yauman, B. E. (1991). School-based counseling for children of divorce: a review of the literature. Elementary School Guidance and Counseling, 26, 130-137.

Appendix B

Pretest and Post-test

Pretest
Counselling Skills Exercises

Name: _____

Part 1: Listening

For the following situations you are asked to listen very carefully to what the client is saying and identify the kinds of experiences and behaviors that give rise to the client's feelings.

1. A Grade 8 student says: "My teacher told me today that I've done better work than she ever expected. I always thought I could be good at my studies if I applied myself. (He smiles). So I tried this semester, and it's paid off. It's really paid off!"

(a). **Client's key experiences:**

(b). **Client's key behaviors:**

(c). **What feelings/emotions do these experiences and behaviors generate?**

2. A senior high student, who was involved in a car accident: "I should never have taken the car without mom's permission. (She keeps wringing her hands.) What will mom say when she gets home from work. (She grimaces.) She says I'm irresponsible and careless as it is. She probably will never let me have the car again. What will she say about the damage? (She stands up and walks around.) I am in big trouble. (She sits down, stares at the floor, keeps tapping her fingers on the desk.) I don't know what to do."

3. (a). **Client's key experiences:**

(b). **Clients's key behaviors:**

(c). **What feelings/emotions do these experiences and behaviors generate?**

Part 2: Empathic Responding

For each of the following situations, write a helpful response to the person.

Situation 1: John's parents have been on his back lately about not spending enough time studying. "I do my work, and I'm getting good grades. They don't seem to see it that way. They say that I should be studying at least 2-3 hours a night. What do they want from me?"

Your response: _____

Situation 2: Katie doesn't know what she is going to do next year when she graduates from high school. She has not taken the opportunity to attend career exploration sessions offered by the guidance counsellor. In fact, she has refused a number of invitations when approached by her counsellor. Katie doesn't feel that she can approach her counsellor for help now after refusing earlier.

Your response: _____

Situation 3: Paula is new to the school this year. She comes to you and says: "I really hate this school. The school I went to last year was so great, and now I feel like I don't even want to come to school."

Your response: _____

Part 3: Empathic Listening

Identify which response is the best example of empathic listening by placing a (✓) mark in the space provided.

1. "All of my friends are beginning to drink. I don't want to start but I feel left out when I refuse."

Helper Responses:

- _____ (a). "I hear you saying you feel uncomfortable when you refuse to drink with your friends."
- _____ (b). "You could find new friends."
- _____ (c). "I sense that you are feeling pressure to go along with your friends."

2. "I wish my parents would get off my back. They're never happy with anything I do."

Helper Responses:

- _____ (a). "Well, why don't you just tell them how you feel."
- _____ (b). "It sounds like you're frustrated with always having your parents on your back."
- _____ (c). "It sounds like you're pretty mad with your parents."

3. "I try so hard to be good in P.E., but I get so embarrassed because I can't play basketball."

Helper Responses:

- _____ (a). "Sometimes it's hard to feel like you're no good in basketball even though you do your best."
- _____ (b). "Sometimes you just have to face the idea that you can't be good in basketball."
- _____ (c). "What have you done to learn how to play basketball?"

Part 4: Paraphrasing

Imagine yourself in the role of helper in the following situation. Paraphrase the helpee's statements into a form which reflects both feeling and content.

Situation 1: "I'm sick and tired of beating the streets looking for a job. Everywhere I go, I hear the same old story, "If anything comes up, we'll get in touch with you." Sometimes I wonder if I'll ever find a job."

Paraphrasing Response: _____

Situation 2: "My parents are not going to trust me ever again. I went to a friend's house to a party on Friday night instead of going to the school social. They found out about it. I realize I shouldn't have done that. I wish there was some way I could convince them that it won't happen again."

Paraphrasing Response: _____

Post-test
Counselling Skills Exercises

Name: _____

Part 1: Listening

For the following situations you are asked to listen very carefully to what the client is saying and identify the kinds of experiences and behaviors that give rise to the client's feelings.

1. A Grade 8 student says: "My teacher told me today that I've done better work than she ever expected. I always thought I could be good at my studies if I applied myself. (He smiles). So I tried this semester, and it's paid off. It's really paid off!"

(a). **Client's key experiences:**

(b). **Client's key behaviors:**

(c). **What feelings/emotions do these experiences and behaviors generate?**

2. A senior high student, who was involved in a car accident: "I should never have taken the car without mom's permission. (She keeps wringing her hands.) What will mom say when she gets home from work. (She grimaces.) She says I'm irresponsible and careless as it is. She probably will never let me have the car again. What will she say about the damage? (She stands up and walks around.) I am in big trouble. (She sits down, stares at the floor, keeps tapping her fingers on the desk.) I don't know what to do."

3. (a). **Client's key experiences:**

(b). **Clients's key behaviors:**

(c). **What feelings/emotions do these experiences and behaviors generate?**

Part 2: Empathic Responding

For each of the following situations, write a helpful response to the person.

Situation 1: John's parents have been on his back lately about not spending enough time studying. "I do my work, and I'm getting good grades. They don't seem to see it that way. They say that I should be studying at least 2-3 hours a night. What do they want from me?"

Your response: _____

Situation 2: Katie doesn't know what she is going to do next year when she graduates from high school. She has not taken the opportunity to attend career exploration sessions offered by the guidance counsellor. In fact, she has refused a number of invitations when approached by her counsellor. Katie doesn't feel that she can approach her counsellor for help now after refusing earlier.

Your response: _____

Situation 3: Paula is new to the school this year. She comes to you and says: "I really hate this school. The school I went to last year was so great, and now I feel like I don't even want to come to school."

Your response: _____

Part 3: Empathic Listening

Identify which response is the best example of empathic listening by placing a (✓) mark in the space provided.

1. "All of my friends are beginning to drink. I don't want to start but I feel left out when I refuse."

Helper Responses:

- _____ (a). "I hear you saying that you feel uncomfortable when you refuse to drink with your friends."
- _____ (b). "You could find new friends."
- _____ (c). "I sense that you are feeling pressure to go along with your friends."

2. "I wish my parents would get off my back. They're never happy with anything I do."

Helper Responses:

- _____ (a). "Well, why don't you just tell them how you feel."
- _____ (b). "It sounds like you're frustrated with always having your parents on your back."
- _____ (c). "It sounds like you're pretty mad with your parents."

3. "I try so hard to be good in P.E., but I get so embarrassed because I can't play basketball."

Helper Responses:

- _____ (a). "Sometimes it's hard to feel like you're no good in basketball even though you do your best."
- _____ (b). "Sometimes you just have to face the idea that you can't be good in basketball."
- _____ (c). "What have you done to learn how to play basketball?"

Part 4: Paraphrasing

Imagine yourself in the role of helper in the following situation. Paraphrase the helpee's statements into a form which reflects both feeling and content.

Situation 1: "I'm sick and tired of beating the streets looking for a job. Everywhere I go, I hear the same old story, "If anything comes up, we'll get in touch with you." Sometimes I wonder if I'll ever find a job."

Paraphrasing Response: _____

Situation 2: “My parents are not going to trust me ever again. I went to a friend’s house to a party on Friday night instead of going to the school social. They found out about it. I realize I shouldn’t have done that. I wish there was some way I could convince them that it won’t happen again.”

Paraphrasing Response: _____

Appendix C

Consent Forms

April 26, 1999

Mrs. Kelly Brenton
Graduate Student
Masters of Educational Psychology Programme
Faculty of Education
Memorial University of Newfoundland
St. John's Campus
St. John's, NF

Mr. Rick Canning
Principal-Eugene Vaters Junior High School
St. John's, NF

Dear Mr. Rick Canning,

Please accept this letter of request to administer a Peer Helping Training Program to selected students from Grade 7 and 8 at Eugene Vaters Junior High. This training will focus on helping skills, values clarification, problem solving, ethics, and the referral process. These peer helpers will then be used in various ways in the guidance and counselling program for the upcoming school year, under the supervision of the guidance counsellor. To evaluate the effectiveness of the training, I wish to distribute a test to the selected peer helpers before the training and after the training is completed. I wish to include the results of these tests in the research component of my Internship Report for the partial fulfilment of the requirement for a Masters degree. This research project has been approved by the Faculty of Education Ethics Committee. Peer helper participation is voluntary and their names will not be identified in the course of the research. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at 726-4647. If you wish to speak to my advisor, you can contact Dr. William Kennedy at 737-7617 or Dr. Bruce Sheppard, Associate Dean of Graduate Programs & Research, at 737-8587. I thank you for your consideration in this manner.

Sincerely,

Kelly Brenton

Dear Sir or Madame;

I am an Educational Psychology Graduate student in the Faculty of Education at Memorial University of Newfoundland. I am now doing an internship at Eugene Vaters Junior High where, as a part of my internship, I will be implementing a Peer Helper Training Program for selected students from Grade 7 and 8. With the Faculty of Education Ethics Review Committee's approval, I will be conducting research on the effectiveness of this training on peer helpers. To collect the needed data, I wish to distribute a test to the peer helpers before and after the completion of the training. This test will focus on the level of counselling skill acquired as a result of the training process. Upon completion of this research, the results will be included in my Internship report. The information gathered at Eugene Vaters Junior High will not identify any student involved in this process.

This letter is to ask you to allow your child to participate in this research by permitting him or her to complete the tests. I would appreciate your help, but you are certainly not obliged to give your consent. Your child should be aware that participation in the research is voluntary and s/he has the right to opt out at any time. If you are in agreement to allow your child to participate, please sign below and return this form to myself or Mrs. Paula George (guidance counsellor) at Eugene Vaters Junior High School. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at 726-4647. If you wish to speak to my advisor, you can contact Dr. William Kennedy at 737-7617 or Dr. Bruce Sheppard, Associate Dean of Graduate Programs & Research, at 737-8587.

Thank you for consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Kelly Brenton

I, _____, hereby agree to allow my child, _____, to complete the tests for the research project on the level of counselling skills acquired during peer helper training undertaken by Kelly Brenton. I understand that participation is voluntary, and I or my child has the right to revoke permission at any time. I also understand that no individual (except the researcher) will be identified in this research.

Date: _____

Signature of Consenting Party: _____

To: Parents

From: Paula George (Guidance Counsellor) and Kelly Brenton (Counselling Intern)

Re: Peer Helping Program

May 13, 1999

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Our school is embarking upon a new program entitled **Peer Helping**. The purpose of this program is to train selected students in communication and interpersonal skills that would enhance their own self-development and enable them to effectively help others.

The objectives of the program are:

- (1) to develop greater self-awareness.
- (2) to develop awareness and understanding of interpersonal relationships.
- (3) to develop sensitivity to one's own and the feeling of others.
- (4) to develop more effective methods of interacting with others.
- (5) to develop skills in decision making and problem solving.
- (6) to provide opportunities for students to apply their skills in a variety of helping roles.

Your son/daughter has been selected for this program. S/He will be required to attend training sessions twice a week for one hour during class time. After completion of training, s/he may become involved in one or more peer helping projects or activities within the school.

Please indicate below if you give consent for your child to participate in this program. The bottom portion of this letter should be returned to the school on or before Monday, May 17, 1999.

I give permission for my child, _____ to participate in the **Peer Helper Program** at Eugene Vaters Junior High.

Parent/ Guardian

Appendix D

Nomination Form

MEMO

To: Staff

From: Paula George and Kelly Brenton

Date: May 5, 1999

Re: Nominations for Peer Helper Program

In the coming week, we will be implementing a Peer Helping Training Program. We will be selecting students based predominantly on teacher recommendation, although these students will still be required to complete an application form. This program will be open to students in Grade 7 & 8. The training sessions for the selected students will take place during class time, twice a week for one hour.

Preferred Characteristics of Helpers:

- (1) Students who display a genuine interest in helping others.
- (2) Students who show a tolerance for differences in people.
- (3) Students who show characteristics of warmth, caring, and acceptance of others.
- (4) Students who show confidence in themselves and in their ability to help others.
- (5) Students who show leadership qualities in various social groups.

I would like to nominate the following students for the peer helper program:

	<u>Name:</u>	<u>Homeroom:</u>
(1)	_____	_____
(2)	_____	_____
(3)	_____	_____
(4)	_____	_____
(5)	_____	_____

Teacher's Signature

Appendix E

Application Form

Application Form for Peer Helping Program

Name: _____**Address:** _____

_____**Phone:** _____**Date of Birth:** _____ **Grade:** _____

Why do you wish to be a peer helper? Please give specific reasons:

What do you hope to gain from this program?

List the qualities you have that you think would make you a good peer helper:

Describe any previous experiences you have had that would be a contribution toward being a peer helper:

List the groups, clubs, organizations, etc. that you are involved with, both in and out of school:

What needs do you see in our school that this program can help address:

Appendix F
Confidentiality Contract

Confidentiality Contract

Date: _____

As a peer helper I realize that I will often be involved in conversations of a confidential nature. I understand that I must not share any of this information gained through peer helping. An exception would be during peer helping training sessions where such information may be used as a case study. In this case, though, all names will be kept anonymous. Also, I understand that confidentiality cannot be maintained in situations of abuse, danger to self, or danger to others.

Peer Helper's Signature

Program Coordinator's Signature

School Counsellor's Signature

Appendix G

Peer Helping Training Modules

The following is an outline of the modules used during Peer Helping training. They are presented here in the same order as they were presented to the participants.

Module 1: Pretesting

- Warm-up activity: *Information Sheet* taken from Peer Power Book 1 by Judith Tindall, page 28
- Pretest

Module 2: Orientation

- Goals and objectives of the program
- Expectations of the program
- Confidentiality contract
- Handout: *Ten Commandments of Human Relations* taken from Peer Counselling Program by Joan O'Reilly and Len Hynes

Module 3: Attending Skill

- Physical attending-lecture
 - S-squareness of body
 - O-openness
 - L-leaning
 - E-eye contact
 - R-relax
- Verbal attending-lecture
- Psychological attending-lecture

- Activity: *Reaction to Attending* taken from Peer Power Book 1 by Judith Tindall

Module 4: Roadblocks to Communication

- Communication stoppers-lecture
- Role-playing activity taken from Peer Counselling Starter Kit by Rey Carr and Greg Saunders
- Five styles of responding-lecture

Module 5: Listening Skills

- Active listening-lecture
- Activity: *Building Listening Skills* taken from Peer Counselling Program by Joan O'Reilly and Len Hynes
- *Ten Guidelines for Effective Listening* taken from Large Group Guidance Activities by Joe Wittmer and Diane Thompson

Module 6: Empathic Listening

- Empathic listening-lecture
- Activity: *Recognizing the Feeling* taken from Peer Counselling Starter Kit by Rey Carr and Greg Saunders
- Activity: *So That's How You Feel* taken from Large Group Guidance Activities by Joe Wittmer and Diane Thompson
- Activity: *Empathic Listening* taken from Peer Counselling Program by Joan O'Reilly and Len Hynes

Module 7: Empathic Responding

- Activity: *The Maligned Wolf* taken from Large Group Guidance Activities by Joe Wittmer and Diane Thompson
- Empathic responding: responding to feelings
- Activity: *Responding to Feelings* taken from Peer Counselling Program by Joan O'Reilly and Len Hynes
- Formula approach: you feel _____ because _____.
- Role-playing empathic responding
- Activity: *Writing Empathic Responses* taken from Peer Counselling Program by Joan O'Reilly and Len Hynes
- Handout: *Empathic Conversation Leads* taken from Peer Counselling Program by Joan O'Reilly and Len Hynes

Module 8: Questioning

- Activity: *Asking the Appropriate Questions to Improve Communication* taken from Large Group Guidance Activities by Joe Wittmer and Diane Thompson
- Questioning: closed questions and open-ended questions-lecture
- Activity: *Identifying Open and Closed Questions* taken from Peer Counselling Program by Joan O'Reilly and Len Hynes
- Role-playing open-ended questions

Module 9: Paraphrasing

- Paraphrasing lecture and modeling
- Role-playing paraphrasing
- Activity: *Simulated Summarizing Responses* taken from Peer Counselling Program by Joan O'Reilly and Len Hynes

Module 10: Values Clarification

- Values clarification-lecture
- Activity: *Recognizing Values* taken from Peer Counselling Program by Joan O'Reilly and Len Hynes
- Activity: *Baby X* taken from Peer Counselling Program by Joan O'Reilly and Len Hynes
- Activity: *The Fallout Shelter* taken from Peer Counselling Starter Kit by Rey Carr and Greg Saunders



